

A NEW SPECIES OF *LITOTHAMNUS* (ASTERACEAE, EUPATORIEAE)
FROM BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

A new species, *Litothamnus saundersiae*, from the State of Bahia, Brazil, is described and illustrated. Its relationship to previously described closely related taxa is briefly discussed.

KEY WORDS: Asteraceae, Eupatorieae, *Litothamnus*, Brazil

Routine identification of South American Asteraceae has revealed the following novelty.

Litothamnus saundersiae B. Turner, *sp. nov.*, Figure 1. TYPE: BRAZIL. Bahia: Mpio. de Porto Seguro, ca. 13 km na estrada de Arraial d'Ajuda para Transcoso, 1 May 1990, *Andre M. de Carvalho & J. Saunders 3129* (HOLOTYPE: CEPEC; Isotype: TEX!). According to label data, the plant "crescendo sobre solo arenoso, em pleno sol."

Litothamno elliptico King & H. Robins. similis sed bracteis involucri biseriatis subaequalibus eciliatisque et corollis ac acheniis glabris differt.

Resembling *Litothamnus ellipticus* King & H. Robins., but the involucre bracts biseriata, subequal, eciliate, and the corollas and achenes glabrous.

Leafy subsucculent shrub to ca. 3 m high. Stems irregularly 4-6 angled, glabrous. Leaves opposite, mostly 5-8 cm long, 2.5-5.0 cm wide; petioles 2-6 mm long; blades leathery (when dried, presumably subsucculent when fresh), elliptic to obovate elliptic, glabrous, weakly trinervate from well above the base, the margins entire. Heads numerous, arranged in terminal, rounded, somewhat congested cymules, the ultimate peduncles glabrous, 2-8 mm long. Involucres 2(3) seriate, 7-9 mm high, the bracts subequal, glabrous, the outer series oblanceolate, the apices rounded and apiculate. Receptacles convex,

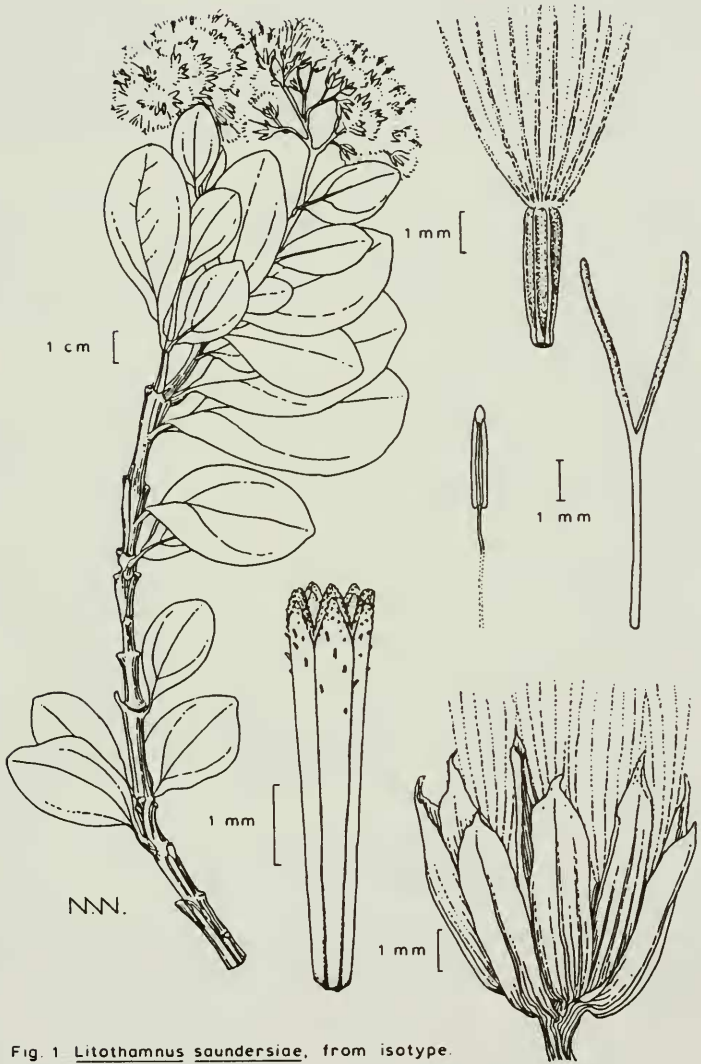


Fig. 1 *Litothamnus saundersiae*, from isotype.

glabrous, epaleate. Florets ca. 20 per head, the corollas white, glabrous, tubular but gradually broadened upwards, 4.5-5.0 mm long, the lobes ca. 0.8 mm long, markedly papillose, especially along the margins. Anthers included within the corolla at anthesis, the collar markedly swollen and scleroid, the appendages as long as wide or longer. Style branches narrow, the appendages nearly filiform, minutely papillose, ca. 0.15 mm wide. Achenes 3.0-3.5 mm long, glabrous, the ribs 5-7, the carpopodium ill defined, merging somewhat into the base of the ribs; pappus biseriate, of numerous persistent barbellate bristles ca. 5 mm long.

The genus *Litothamnus*, first described by King & Robinson (1979), was based upon a single species, *L. ellipticus* King & H. Robins. It becomes bitypic with the description of *L. saundersiae*. The latter differs in many features from the former, but is clearly closely related to *L. ellipticus* in its vegetative aspect, but also in all of its essential floral features (characters of the corolla, androecium and gynoecium).

King & Robinson (1987, pp. 110-113) discuss the characters which mark *Litothamnus*, noting its superficial resemblance to the shrubby elements of the genus *Mikania*, but correctly surmise that it is a rather isolated member of their subtribe Gyptidinae, which includes a hodgepodge of genera, thirteen of these newly erected, twelve of which are monotypic or bitypic. I have opted to describe the present species under *Litothamnus*, instead of an expanded *Eupatorium*, so as to call attention to its unique combination of characters and its immediate relationship. That the subtribe Gyptidinae might represent a monophyletic assemblage is debatable, but it does appear that at least some of the small genera recognized by King & Robinson might be effectively combined. Thus, *Litothamnus saundersiae* approaches the bitypic genus *Morithamnus* King & H. Robins. in some of its characters (e.g., subequal involucre bracts, eglandular achenes, and flattened pappus bristles), and these two genera (and perhaps others) might be effectively united in future treatments of this interesting "generic" complex.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Dr. Guy Nesom for the Latin diagnosis and to him and Dr. Carol Todzia for reviewing the manuscript. Nancy Webber provided the illustration.

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